

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 220628

LIMDIS

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION STATE FROM ASUNCION NOV. 7,
REPEATED TO YOU:

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 4386

LIMDIS

DEPARTMENT PASS ALL APPROPRIATE ARA POSTS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CO, PA

SUBJECT: LA FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING IN BOGOTA

REF: ASUNCION 4264

1. FOREIGN MINISTER SAPENA PASTOR CALLED ME TO HIS OFFICE
NOVEMBER 7 AND INFORMED ME THAT AFTER DISCUSSING THE
FORTHCOMING BOGOTA CONFERENCE WITH PRESIDENT STROESSNER
THE LATTER HAD REVERSED HIS ORIGINAL DECISION AND
FOLLOWING SAPENA PASTOR'S RECOMMENDATION DECIDED THAT
PARAGUAY SHOULD NOT ATTEND THE MEETING.

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2. IN EXPLAINING THE REVERSAL SAPENA PASTOR SAID THAT HE

HAD BEEN FOREIGN MINISTER FOR SEVENTEEN YEARS AND BASED ON HIS LONG EXPERIENCE HAD CONCLUDED THAT THE BOGOTA MEETING WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE HELPFUL IN IMPROVING US-LA RELATIONS. HE SAID HOWEVER THAT HE HOPED A MEETING OF ALL FOREIGN MINISTERS INCLUDING SECRETARY KISSINGER WOULD TAKE PLACE AFTER THE US HAD BEEN ABLE TO RETHINK ITS LA POLICY AND THAT AT THAT TIME AN AGENDALESS ROUND TABLE MEETING WITHOUT SPEECHES OR BILATERAL GRIEVANCE PAPERS MIGHT BE FRUITFUL. HE SAID THAT THE FOUNDATION OF PARAGUAY'S FOREIGN POLICY WAS ITS FRIENDSHIP WITH THE US AND THAT THE PRESIDENT HELD HIM RESPONSIBLE WITH THAT THIS FRIENDSHIP NOT BE ENDANGERED. MOREOVER HE HAD DETECTED A US TREND TO PLACE MAJOR EMPHASIS ON BILATERAL RATHER THAN MULTILATERAL DEALINGS WITH LA COUNTRIES - A TREND WHICH HE HIGHLY FAVORED.

3. SAPENA PASTOR SAID THAT HE WOULD HOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE LATER THIS MORNING WHERE HE WOULD GIVE AS OFFICIAL REASON FOR NON-ATTENDANCE THE ARRIVAL ON NOVEMBER 8 OF AN ARGENTINE NEGOTIATING TEAM TO WORK OUT DETAILS ON THE SOON-TO-BE SIGNED YACYRETA-APIPE HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT.

4. COMMENT: AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE SAPENA PASTOR HAS BEEN HIGHLY SUSPICIOUS OF VAZQUEZ CARRIZOSA'S MOTIVES IN CALLING THE MEETING BUT HAD AGREED TO ATTEND TO SHOW SOLIDARITY. AFTER HE LEARNED THAT INVITATION TO SECRETARY OF STATE WAS ISSUED ONLY OCTOBER 28 HE CONVINCED THE PRESIDENT THAT REGARDLESS OF PUBLICLY EXPRESSED GOOD INTENTIONS THE MEETING WOULD RESULT IN A GANG UP ON THE U.S. AND THAT IT WAS IN PARAGUAY'S BEST INTEREST NOT TO BE INVOLVED. DEPARTMENT MAY RECALL THAT GOP FOLLOWED SIMILAR TACTICS BY NOT ATTENDING THE MARCH SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING IN PANAMA TO AVOID BEING PRESENT AT A CONFERENCE CRITICAL OF THE U.S.

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UNQUOTE RUSH

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